

INDUSTRIAL TOXICOLOGY. By Lawrence T. Fairhall. Second Edition. (Pp. xii + 376. 80s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1957.

With the increasing rate at which new chemicals are being introduced to industry, it has become more and more apparent that the toxicologist must try to discover at least the basic principles upon which to determine by an examination of its formula the toxicity of any given substance. Up to now these principles have been elusive and our knowledge is fragmentary in the extreme. The replacement of a hydrogen atom with chlorine in the saturated hydrocarbons results in an immediate increase of toxicity, as does the attachment of a halogen group to the organic sulphur compounds. The relatively inert and inoffensive hydroxyl group when introduced into an organic molecule frequently results in an increase of toxicity, and in general the iso-compounds are somewhat less toxic than normal compounds. But these and many similar observations have so many exceptions that they are virtually of little value in predicting the toxicities of new substances. Inevitably it is necessary to carry out experimental work in animals.

This book is a concise compendium of available information about this work with a vast variety of chemicals used in industry. No attempt is made to organise a rational basis for the study of the subject. Symptomatology is inadequately discussed for the clinician, and the pathologist will find in the references, which are copious, the book's greatest value. Until a systematic textbook for the physician is written this volume will deserve a place on the bookshelves of any doctor whose work involves a consideration of toxic processes and their effect on human beings.

J. A. S.

REHABILITATION OF THE ELDERLY INVALID AT HOME. By G. F. Adams, M.D., M.R.C.P., F. M. McQuitty, M.B., D.(Obst.), R.C.O.G., and M. Y. Flint, M.C.S.P. (Pp. viii + 46; figs. 3). London: Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust.

THIS is a most interesting report of an experiment in home treatment for the elderly invalid. The experiment was carried out by the staff of the geriatric unit of the Belfast City Hospital, and the report is full of valuable information presented in a very readable form. When we are told that less than 5 per cent. of old people are cared for in institutions, we can realize the value of the experiment which has been carried out by Dr. Adams and his colleagues.

Many interesting tables are given, showing the type of patient and the response to treatment. Even where it was not possible to get full response from the patient, the improvement in the morale of the household was noted. In many cases the general well-being of the patient improved and physical handicaps were overcome.

The scheme was designed to bring into the home the medical care and physiotherapy practised in the geriatric ward, thus reducing the demand on long-stay hospital beds.

Any scheme which makes the lot of the elderly invalid easier and helps them to overcome their disabilities is of inestimable value.

O. M. A.

DEAFNESS, MUTISM AND MENTAL DEFICIENCY IN CHILDREN. By L. Minski, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.M. (Pp. viii + 82; figs. 13. 12s. 6d.) London: Heinemann, 1957.

A READABLE survey of the factors involved in the assessment of the mute child in order to establish whether deafness or mental deficiency is the basic cause, particularly when there is the added complication of emotional disturbance.

Dr. Minski describes the lay-out, staffing, and the methods used at the Belmont Hospital, where a research unit was set up in March, 1953, and which has now been made permanent. He also describes the more recently established home at Sutton for deaf children who "require long-term treatment to remove their emotional difficulties." This is run in conjunction with the hospital unit. Perhaps more space could have been usefully given to the consideration of the characteristic differences between deaf-mutism and hearing-mutism, and attention drawn to the fact that mutism can exist with or without comprehension of the spoken word. For those interested in these problems this volume can be recommended.

F. M. B. A.